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PRINCIPLES  
OF  
**Prayer and Humiliation,**

IN A TIME OF

*National Guilt and Distress.*

BY A LAYMAN.

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### ADVERTISEMENT.

*The following exemplification of the Principles of Prayer, is not published by any sectary; or to serve any cause but that of TRUE RELIGION AND PEACE, in opposition to the Iniquities of Tyranny, Warfare, and Revenge.*

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# PRINCIPLES

OF

## PRAYER, &c.

**M**OST Adorable Creator and Governor of the world! we beseech thee, of thine infinite mercy, enable us so to conceive of thy glorious nature, that with all suitable reverence, we may address ourselves unto Thee!—Thou hast furnished our minds with a capacity for receiving impressions of thy righteousness and truth; and through the blessed agency of thy Son, our immaculate Saviour, thou hast taught us the divine privileges of prayer, thanksgiving and praise!

We would not, on this occasion, approach thy Sacred Throne with the language of empty formality, or because we are bidden, of offending and presumptuous men, to pray; but we would put up our supplications unto Thee, as those awfully awakened to a sense of their sins and their dangers have ever been wont to do!—We desire, with profound humility and abasement of ourselves, to acknowledge our unworthiness,

worthiness, and our manifold offences against Thee: they have been such as to have degraded our reasonable nature, and have rendered us individually obnoxious to thy divine displeasure!—Thou hast graciously condescended to convince us of the enormity of our transgressions, and the imminent dangers attendant upon us in a state of impiety. We supplicate, therefore, with unfeigned contrition, thy merciful pardon of our sins which are past; and that we may “receive with meekness the ingrafted word” of thy salvation for the time which is to come.

By thy exemplary judgments, which are in the earth, we are fearfully admonished, O Lord, that though Thou hast mercifully nourished and brought up innumerable children, for the gracious purposes of wisdom and universal happiness, yet they have revolted and rebelled against Thee! They have set at nought thy counsel, and have violated the sacred precepts of thy sovereign authority! Thou hast fed, of thine infinite bounty, the rational workmanship of thy hands, and hast replenished all, from the boundless blessedness of thine eternal providence! But instead of cultivating those affections, which, for their felicity and thy glory, Thou hadst ordained, they have engendered wrath as Cain, and have chosen “the gainfaying of Korah.”—Therefore, O most holy and Omnipotent Being! before whom all depravities and all forrows are known; and from whom are the judgments of redemption



demption to eternal life; we beseech Thee, look down with mercy, on the moral death and wretchedness of the nations!—We presume not to palliate those national crimes, of thy accountable creation, which have been impiously wrought before Thee: perfectly known unto Thee are all the *motives* of all men, and the inmost recesses of their hearts, throughout all generations. Thou seest the evil leaven of malice and of iniquity,—the combinations of corruption, which prevail in the governments of the earth, and which have diffused iniquity through the subordinate ranks of the people! They have continually coveted with an evil covetousness; they have exchanged a perfect hatred where Thou hadst commanded love: they have compassed sea and land for vengeance, for the delusive gain of oppression, and for opportunities of violence against their fellow beings, and against Thee!—They have professed thy sanctions for blood, and have carried with them, through the world, a blasphemous antidote against the reception of thy glorious name!

When we consider also, O merciful Father, the unhallowed doctrines,—the impious corruptions of thy *truth*,—the hypocrisy, idolatry, and slavery, which have been inculcated, by the pretended teachers of thy undefiled religion;—by men who have obscured the image of thine essential glory in the rational understanding—men who have seduced the unwary to sensuality and violence, and have thereby  
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slain the souls of thy people, as before the altar!—When we consider the pestilential influence, which has been derived from *them*, to strengthen the purposes of a corrupt dominion, among the kings and tyrants of the earth; and when we mournfully reflect on the sanguinary consequences which have flowed from all these,—our holy indignation, and horror of soul, O God, must be poured out unto Thee!

Thou hast pronounced upon the sins of the people, the *lamentations* of old:—That “the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint—from the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores.”—Thou hast pronounced thy *woes*, not only upon the *crown* of pride—not only “upon him who buildeth a town with blood”—but upon all “them who call evil good, and good evil—who put darkness for light, and light for darkness—who justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him.” Thou hast pronounced thy woes upon the *world*, because of offences; and emphatically “upon that man by whom the offence cometh:”—Thou hast fixed them on the heads of all “scribes, and pharisees, hypocrites,”—and on “them who decree unrighteous decrees.”

But we “thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth,” that though, as a punishment for sin  
and



and forgetfulness of Thee, Thou hast hid the beauty of thy truth from the hardened and impenitent,—from the tyrant, and the voluntary slave; yet Thou art causing the light of thy righteousness, to shine upon them who seek Thee:—Thou art giving them the unspeakable privilege to “look into thy perfect law of liberty—and *to teach men so!*” And we humbly pray Thee, that multitudes of every nation, kindred, people, and tongue, may *so look*, and *so become taught*; that not being forgetful hearers, but *doers* of thy word, they may be “the salt of the earth,” and blessed in their deeds for ever!

Penetrated as we are, and as we desire still more to be, with a sense of the perfect *equality* of thy judgments and mercies, present and eternal; and that “Thou hast made of one blood, all nations to dwell “on the face of the earth;” we presume not to invoke thy vengeance upon *any* of our fellow-men! We dare not interpose our presumptuous wishes, against those who are called our enemies; or pray for thy blessing upon any of the weapons of destruction!—This, *as Christians*, we cannot do: and, *as thine offspring*, preserve us, O fountain of love, from the deformity of such a disposition!—Teach us to consider our adversaries, and all the inhabitants of the earth, as *our brethren*, in a common relationship to *thee*, the *Universal Father!* Teach us, in all reverence of thy peternal authority, and under the influence

ence of those affections which thou hast commanded for thy family, to refrain from promoting all aggravation and revenge! Teach us to know, that their consequences are chargeable on the aggressors, in common with those who are driven to the cruelties and madness of desperation!—Teach us of this land, in a peculiar manner to know, that *we* have no moral pretensions of appeal unto thee, against the impieties of any country, till (in the penitence of sackcloth and ashes) we shall have ceased from that infernal oppression—the “*dealing in slaves and souls of men!*”

Give us a deep and most awful sense of the guilt of shedding human blood! That it is not the proper price of differences in human opinion, upon the œconomy of human governments!—That it is not the proper penalty of the offences of reason, against the pride and arrogance of ambitious men!—Impress, we beseech thee, the whole human race, with a clear distinction between that righteous government which is of thy spirit, and that grasping vindictive dominion, which “pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness,” have rendered the curse of nations!

We would address THEE, O God, as the Sovereign Legislator of the Universe!—We would unfeignedly profess our belief in THEE, as the *King Eternal* and *Immortal*, though *Invisible*,—as that adorable Being, before whom all the kingdoms of the earth are feeble;



ble; and all the kings of the earth, in comparison of thy truth, are less than nothing and vanity!—We would acknowledge, from the heart, our absolute duty of a dependence upon thy providence, in the most trying moments!—That all the blandishments of human warfare are but the instruments of iniquity; and that the consecrated banner of thy righteousness and peace, which Thou hast commanded to be universally set up, is the only sanctuary of immortal beings!—In a perfect reliance and integrity of heart, we would commit ourselves unto thy protection;—we would place, for time and for eternity, our whole dependence on Thee; and though we should *die*, we would die at thy feet!—But we have abundant cause of assurance in thy divine veracity!—and evermore to rest in the doctrine, that “in thy presence there is *life*,” and that, in all the possibilities of things, the filial reverential “fear of *Thee* is as a “*fountain of life*, to preserve from the snares of *death*.”

Thy power alone is a sure and impregnable defence: Wherever meekly acknowledged, by individuals, or by nations of men, it will be found the munition of rocks, and the refuge of eternal hills!—“Why, then, “(disregarding Thee) should the heathen rage, and “the people imagine a vain thing,” for safety?—The rulers of this world, in renouncing thy authority, are in perpetual trouble: they lead on the people to destruction, to “die without any regarding it!”—They  
*dare,*

*dare*, indeed, to confess *Thy Existence*, while they impute *Atheism* to their fellow-sinners; but they make *themselves* drunken with ungodliness; and while they pretend to vindicate the holy Christian religion, they reverse the sanctity of all its laws, and live as without Thee in the world!—Thus they profess “to honour Thee with the lip and with the tongue, but their hearts are far from thee!” Thus they destroy in themselves, and as far as their influence extends, all resemblance of thy truth!—Diveſting themſelves of every thing amiable in brotherly kindneſs, they widen the breaches of diſcord, and provoke each other to madneſs:—they claim a ferocious kindred with the beaſts of the deſert, and with the tygers of the wilderneſs!

Moſt merciful God, of purity and of peace! in the conſideration of ſuch a miſerable ſtate of our fellow-beings, and conſcious as we are of our own defection from “the ways of thy commandments;” how ſhall we addreſs Thee in the language of acceptable interceſſion?—What can we bring before Thee in ſacrifice (if ſacrifice could *avail* with Thee) that the continuation of thy righteous judgments may be averted from us, and from the unhappy millions of human kind? But Thou haſt already ſaid, that external “*sacrifice and offerings*, Thou wouldeſt not:”—We muſt tremble to plead the *voluntary* ſacrifice of our dear Redeemer, (the juſt for the unjuſt!) for the rulers of all nations, which have named the name of Chriſt,  
have



have not departed from iniquity; they “ have done  
 “ despite to the Spirit of Grace; they have cruci-  
 “ fied the Son of God afresh—have put him to open  
 “ shame—and have treated the sanctifying blood of  
 “ the Covenant, as an unholy thing !”

We would acknowledge, with deep humility, that we also have dreadfully forsaken the Christian precepts, and those “ reproofs of thy instruction, which “ are the way to life.” We have not sufficiently fought, to bear our testimony against the evils of the day in which we live; a testimony flowing from the purity of our own hearts; whereby we might have been as lights in the world, and instrumental, in thy hand, for the purposes of publick virtue and holiness! Therefore it is, that in this hour of national apprehension and distress, *we* are included in the guilt, which it is the purpose of thy calamities to punish.

Enable us, thou only source of mercy and of strength, deeply afflicted as we are with our impotence and demerits, to submit ourselves to every suffering, which, according to thy good pleasure, may await us:—And more especially permit us to implore with acceptance, that a most powerful, awakening sense of *sin and transgression*, may seize upon the wicked of all nations, who are now engaged in the carnage we deplore!—A carnage, beyond the power of our con-  
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ception horrible; and which, while it is in itself an awful punishment upon them who fall, must also be dreadfully atoned for by the unhappy individuals who cause it!—It is *Thou*, and *Thou alone*, who, looking down with compassion, on the wretched devices of the rulers, and the sanguinary fury of the deluded multitudes,—can’st strike them dumb with silence, and with universal terror! *Thou*, and *Thou alone*, canst effectually confound all the counsellors and leaders of destruction—and melt, into a susceptibility of feeling, the barbarous ferocity of their slavish hosts! *Thou alone* canst “take from them their stony heart, and give them an heart of flesh!”

For such an interposition of thy sacred *fiat*, we beg permission most fervently to supplicate Thee, O God! and that in the prevalent name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

By the mediatorial aid of *that perfect teacher*, whom we desire to receive as the High Priest and Bishop of our souls, we would also fervently invoke Thee, for the introduction of that reign of righteousness and peace, in which “the lion and the lamb shall lie down together,” in the harmony of thy heavenly kingdom!—in which “all nations shall beat their swords into plough-shares—their spears into pruning-hooks—and learn war no more!”—For, in the renewed contemplation of thy adorable nature,

as



as revealed to us, and as instamped with lively evidences on the tablets of our minds, we cannot but continue to ascribe unto Thee the gracious original design of *everlasting felicity*,—not merely to an elected few, but to all the myriads of angels and of men!—Though angels may have fallen from their spheres—and men may have counteracted the privileges of their birthright, so as never to have gained an earnest of inheritance in *thy* celestial munificence; though multitudes in all nations, and in all ages, may never have discerned, according to thy spirit, the transcendent beauty of *thy* most benignant government;—yet hast Thou given us faith to believe, that in *time*, as well as in the boundless riches of *eternity*, *thy purposes will be completed!*

FINALLY, therefore, O God, under these solemn impressions of thine infinite mercy, permit us to render unto Thee, *all we can* of glory, honour, and praise; that henceforward we may live continually before Thee, as in a new creation of the love of Jesus Christ our Lord, and in the reverent acknowledgement of all thy glorious attributes!!! *Amen.*

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...therefore, O God, ...  
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